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ABSTRACT

The present invention provides a solution to the dual problems of mobility and portability associated with using a portable telephone in combination with a portable computer. A portable computer (164) has an interface (172, 192, 204) that facilitates a direct connection to a portable telephone (166). The interface (172, 192, 204) electrically connects the portable telephone (166) to the portable computer (164) thus eliminating the need for a cable or tethered connection between the portable computer (164) and a portable telephone (166). In one embodiment of the invention, the portable telephone (166) is constructed to fit within a cavity (210) in the portable computer (164). When fully inserted into the computer (164), the portable telephone (166) is physically connected to the portable computer (164) by a latching mechanism and communicates with the portable computer by means of a computer/portable telephone interface (172, 192, 204 that electrically connects the portable telephone to the portable computer). In another embodiment of the invention, the portable telephone serves as the portable computer's modem and function while installed in the computer. Thus, the portable phone facilitates the transmission and reception of data between the portable computer and another computer connected to the telephone system. In yet another embodiment of the invention, the portable computer (and not the portable telephone), contains the modem that is utilized for telephonic data communications. In still another embodiment of the invention, a modem may be omitted altogether for data communications in a completely digital telephone network. An operator of the portable computer/portable telephone also has the option of using the portable telephone for voice transmission independently of the computer, or may enjoy hands free voice operation by using the portable computer's internal speaker and microphone.